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Consumer Price Index, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson – June 2019

Area prices down 0.8 percent since February; up 1.0 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson declined 0.8 percent from April to June, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the recent two-month decrease was due largely to a 6.2-percent decrease in the energy index. The all items less food and energy index and food index also decreased since April, down 0.3 and 0.2 percent, respectively. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 1.0 percent. The over-the-year rise was due almost entirely to an increase in the all items less food and energy index (1.6 percent). The food index also rose over the year, up 1.7 percent, while prices for energy decreased, down 6.9 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

The food index edged down 0.2 percent over the last two months. Prices declined for both food at home and food away from home, down 0.2 percent each. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for various items including uncooked beef steak, while prices were higher for items including carbonated drinks and cheese and related products, among others.

Over the year, the food index increased 1.7 percent. Prices rose for both food away from home (3.5 percent) and food at home (0.1 percent).

Energy

The energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, decreased 6.2 percent. Prices were lower for electricity and gasoline since April, down 10.2 and 4.2 percent, respectively. Utility (piped) gas service prices rose over the last two months, up 6.3 percent.

Over the year, the energy index declined 6.9 percent. Prices were lower for gasoline (-9.6 percent) and electricity (-4.8 percent) since June 2018, while those for utility (piped) gas service increased 9.9 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy edged down 0.3 percent from April to June. Lower prices for medical care (-7.1 percent) and new and used motor vehicles (-3.0 percent) were moderated by higher prices for shelter (2.0 percent), among others.

The index for all items less food and energy increased 1.6 percent since June 2018, led by higher prices for shelter (2.5 percent) and medical care (2.8 percent). Prices were also higher for recreation (2.8 percent), but were lower for apparel (-6.7 percent).

The Consumer Price Index for July 2019 is scheduled to be released Tuesday, August 13, 2019 at 8:30 am (ET).

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Baltimore-Columbia-Towson is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.











































The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, Core Based Statistical Area** includes Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Baltimore City, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's Counties in Maryland.














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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Apr. 2019	May 2019	Jun. 2019	Jun. 2018	Apr. 2019	May 2019
All items.....		258.816		256.790	1.0	-0.8	
Food and beverages		263.698		263.144	1.6	-0.2	
Food		263.166		262.632	1.7	-0.2	
Food at home		233.468	235.293	233.001	0.1	-0.2	-1.0
Cereals and bakery products		289.296		292.247	-0.3	1.0	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		224.266		221.891	-2.4	-1.1	
Dairy and related products		229.537		234.598	4.5	2.2	
Fruits and vegetables		288.342		282.710	3.6	-2.0	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		176.082		173.212	-0.9	-1.6	
Other food at home		208.123		210.144	-1.1	1.0	
Food away from home.....		306.673		306.042	3.5	-0.2	
Alcoholic beverages		268.291		267.490	1.1	-0.3	
Housing(1).....		261.553		264.060	1.8	1.0	
Shelter		308.113	311.297	314.310	2.5	2.0	1.0
Rent of primary residence		361.364	360.589	361.766	1.1	0.1	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		321.188	321.114	321.745	1.4	0.2	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		321.188	321.114	321.745	1.4	0.2	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....		234.621		217.004	-2.7	-7.5	
Household energy		206.744	206.183	189.194	-3.5	-8.5	-8.2
Energy services.....		221.682	221.379	202.385	-3.5	-8.7	-8.6
Electricity		210.553	210.927	189.160	-4.8	-10.2	-10.3
Utility (piped) gas service		175.172	169.251	186.177	9.9	6.3	10.0
Household furnishings and operations.....		121.764		121.688	0.5	-0.1	
Apparel		122.489		118.413	-6.7	-3.3	
Transportation		206.958		203.246	-1.9	-1.8	
Private transportation		205.192		199.947	-2.8	-2.6	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		98.698		95.766	-1.9	-3.0	
New vehicles(1).....		200.337		192.810	-2.3	-3.8	
Used cars and trucks(1)		242.882		242.883	1.1	0.0	
Motor fuel		239.138	246.542	229.006	-9.6	-4.2	-7.1
Gasoline (all types).....		234.063	241.443	224.125	-9.6	-4.2	-7.2
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		236.660	244.455	226.192	-9.9	-4.4	-7.5
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		250.564	255.712	241.084	-8.2	-3.8	-5.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		241.397	246.673	234.616	-8.0	-2.8	-4.9
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		856.879		853.642	3.6	-0.4	
Medical care		474.391		440.777	2.8	-7.1	
Recreation		130.066		126.399	2.8	-2.8	
Education and communication(3).....		145.760		146.497	1.3	0.5	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1)		1,195.793		1,203.697	3.5	0.7	
Other goods and services		425.536		420.855	0.0	-1.1	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		186.046		182.526	-1.4	-1.9	
Commodities less food and beverages		149.965		145.818	-3.0	-2.8	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	Apr. 2019	May 2019	Jun. 2019	Jun. 2018	Apr. 2019	May 2019
Nondurables less food and beverages...		197.019		191.278	-4.3	-2.9	
Durables		102.960		100.273	-1.6	-2.6	
Services.....		329.936		329.202	2.2	-0.2	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		240.554		234.829	0.1	-2.4	
All items less medical care		248.037		247.658	0.8	-0.2	
Commodities less food		153.593		149.488	-2.8	-2.7	
Nondurables		228.051		224.508	-1.4	-1.6	
Nondurables less food.....		201.016		195.531	-3.9	-2.7	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		367.970		357.331	1.8	-2.9	
Services less medical care services.....		316.031		318.357	2.2	0.7	
Energy(1).....		227.395	230.855	213.241	-6.9	-6.2	-7.6
All items less energy		262.734		261.871	1.6	-0.3	
All items less food and energy		262.547		261.642	1.6	-0.3	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a March 1978=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.